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## Château Margaux 2009

CSPC# 749584

750mlx12

13.3% alc./vol.

**Grape Variety**  
**Appellation**  
**General Info**

87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot  
Margaux

1st classified growth in 1855. The château, already known in the 12th century under the name La Mothe de Margaux, started only to resemble to what it is today when the Lestonnac family took it over in 1572 and undertook important restructuring. By the end of the 17th century, Château Margaux already covered 265 hectares (654 acres). At the beginning of the 18th century the estate manager Berlon was the first to vinify red grapes and white grapes separately and understood the importance of terroir. In 1810, a Basque, Bertrand Douat, Marquis de la Colonilla, owner since 1801, built the neo-palladian style residence of Margaux and the cellars which we still admire today. After several successions of owners, the Ginestet family bought the chateau in 1950 after being obliged by the serious economic crises to sell it in 1977 to André Mentzelopoulos, a Greek at the head of the grocery shops Félix Potin. André Mentzelopoulos sensed the opportunity and invested massively without expecting any immediate return in a market that was still depressed and a few years away from the new golden age for Bordeaux at the end of the 20th century. He made spectacular moves: in the vineyard, where better drainage was introduced and new plantations made; in the cellars, under the supervision of the oenologist Emile Peynaud, Pavillon Rouge was reintroduced with a considerable increase in selection; new oak barrels were used to age the wine, plans were drawn up for the first great cellar in the region to be built underground (a technical feat), and Pavillon Blanc was redefined. In the château and its outbuildings, under the supervision of the inspectors for Historic Monuments (Margaux is a classified monument), the reconstitution of the architectural heritage and the renovation of the interior were carried out. All of this was done with deep respect for the existing structures and with the determined aim of allowing the terroir to express its fabulous qualities. Since his death in 1980, his daughter Corinne Mentzelopoulos has been managing the estate and pursuing the investment program of her father.

**Vintage**

After a cold, dry winter, the weather turned rainy and cool in April, causing a rather late bud-break and a somewhat slow growth of the vine shoots. As from May 1st however, temperatures rose quite sharply and settled above the seasonal norms, without ever reaching excessive highs. This allowed a quick and successful flowering that promised a very even ripening of the berries. By then a drought had begun to set in, though in these early days we had no idea of how severe and long it would actually be. Very few vintages (apart from the 2005) have been so dry. It hardly rained from July 10th until the end of the harvest on October 14th! Such dry weather is particularly beneficial to the great terroirs which can regulate the water supply to the vines, and also to Cabernet Sauvignon because it is less affected by drought than Merlot. Still, some of the vines planted in lighter and less clayey soils struggled to get their grapes perfectly ripe. While these very dry months had some very hot days, the nights remained rather cool. This contrast helped the tannins and anthocyanins to concentrate in the skins of the red grapes as well as to preserve freshness of aromas, especially in the Sauvignon Blanc. All the pieces were gradually falling into place to make 2009 a really outstanding vintage. (The picking began on 24th September)

**Vineyards**

The estate has 82 hectares under vine, with Cabernet Sauvignon inevitably dominant (75%) with 20% Merlot making up most of the rest, along with a smattering of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Typically, about 30,000 cases of red wine are made, with the *Grand Vin* usually accounting for just over 40% of the total. Production of the white wine amounts to less than 3,000 cases.

**Harvest**

8th September-14th October



<b>Maturation</b>	Fermentation takes place in oak vats, and ageing is in 100% new barrels for 22 months.
<b>Tasting Notes</b>	2009 is perhaps the greatest young Château Margaux we have tasted over the last 30 years. Mother nature could not have done it all by herself; barely 36% of the crop (i.e. just 31% by the time it is bottled) went into the first wine – a drastic selection for such a vintage. Still, in 2009, she surpassed herself. She allowed the greatest terroirs, whatever their grape variety, to bring their fruit to exceptional ripeness, providing a wine of wonderful concentration, finesse, balance and freshness. The Cabernet (87% of the blend) has no equivalent other than 2005, but it is more tender. The only two batches of Merlot that were kept (9%) have no equivalent at all. As for the Cabernet Franc (2%) and the Petit Verdot (2%), they performed at their highest levels. The 2009 Château Margaux is an unparalleled vintage in its tannic power and fullness (reminding us of 2005) and its softness (reminiscent of 1990). And since its alcoholic degree is barely over 13, its finish remains fresh, flavoursome and of astonishing length.
<b>Production</b>	Approx. 12,500-13,500 cases made
<b>Cellaring</b>	Drink 2018-2035
<b>Scores/Awards</b>	<p><b>96 points</b> - James Molesworth, Wine Spectator - March 31, 2012</p> <p><b>96-99 points</b> - James Suckling, Wine Spectator - Web Only 2010</p> <p><b>99 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #199 - February 2012</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Robert Parker, Wine Advocate #188- April 2010</p> <p><b>94 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - January 2012</p> <p><b>93-95 points</b> - Neal Martin, Wine Journal - May 2010</p> <p><b>100 points</b> - James Suckling, JamesSuckling.com - Web Only 2012</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - February 1, 2012</p> <p><b>95-97 points</b> - Roger Voss, Wine Enthusiast - September 8, 2010</p> <p><b>97-100 points</b> - Ian D'Agata, ST's International Wine Cellar - May/June 2010</p> <p><b>19 points</b> - Jancis Robinson, JancisRobinson.com - April 20, 2010</p> <p><b>18.5-19.5+ points</b> - Chris Kissack, The Wine Doctor - March 2010</p> <p><b>20 points/5 stars</b> - Stephen Spurrier, Decanter.com - April 2010</p> <p><b>98-100 points</b> - Jane Anson, The New Bordeaux - April 2010</p> <p><b>97 points/19 points</b> - Jean Marc Quarin - March 2010</p> <p><b>98 points</b> - Tim Atkin, MW - timatkin.com - April 2010</p>
<b>Reviews</b>	<p><i>Understated in feel, but not for lack of depth or length, as this has beguiling and well-defined notes of black tea, sandalwood, singed vanilla bean and Kenya AA coffee, backed by gorgeously silky plum, blackberry and cassis fruit flavors. But the finish is so balanced, suave, gentle and long, it would be easy to overlook just how much range there is here. So be patient and let cellaring do its thing. Best from 2018 through 2035.</i></p> <p>- JM, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"The nose is so intensely fruity, but subtle and reserved at the same time. Fascinating. Full-bodied, yet super refined, building on the palate. It's like watching a long-distance runner starting off slowly but continuing along his or her path. Fine and dense tannins. A few minutes in the glass and the massive tannins show. Muscular and subdued. Score range: 96-99"</i></p> <p>- JS, Wine Spectator</p> <p><i>"A brilliant offering from the Mentzelopoulos family, once again their gifted manager, Paul Pontallier, has produced an uncommonly concentrated, powerful 2009 Chateau Margaux made from 87% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest primarily Merlot with small amounts of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. As with most Medocs, the alcohol here is actually lower (a modest 13.3%) than most of its siblings-. Abundant blueberry, cassis and acacia flower as well as hints of charcoal and forest floor aromas that are almost Burgundian in their complexity are followed by a wine displaying sweet, well-integrated tannins as well as a certain ethereal lightness despite the wine's overall size. Rich, round, generous and unusually approachable for such a young Margaux, this 2009 should drink well for 30-35+ years."</i></p> <p>- RP, Wine Advocate</p>

## Reviews

*“Thirty-five percent of the crop went into the 2009 Chateau Margaux, composed of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. The alcohol level of 13.3% is high, but not excessively so. A wine such as this is like the quintessence of terroir. A super, uber-concentrated perfume of creme de cassis and flowers cascades across the palate with a lightness of being despite massive concentration, a sumptuous personality, and an unctuous texture. I have never tasted a Chateau Margaux quite like this. It should be relatively drinkable at an early age yet will last for 50-100 years. Oh my! (Tasted once.)*

*Paul Pontallier told me they had never had such levels of concentration and tannin as they did in 2009, exceeding anything they ever produced since the Mentzelopoulos family purchased this property in 1978. Pontallier believes 1996 is the closest stylistically, but 2009 is significantly more concentrated than that vintage. I do not disagree because tasting the second wine, Pavillon Rouge du Chateau Margaux, demonstrates that the 2009 is far superior to almost every Chateau Margaux made in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, except for the 1961 and 1953.”*

- RP, Wine Advocate

*“Tasted at the chateau with Paul Pontallier, who told me that the 2009 was bottled in mid-August because of the density of the tannins required a little more barrel ageing. This has 13.1% alcohol compared to around 13.9% for the Pavillon Rouge. With 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, the nose has typical traits of blackberry, wild hedgerow, graphite and a touch of sous-bois, quite -classic- compared to its primeur showing. The palate is simply awesome: brilliantly defined, filigree tannins, amazing balance and poise, layers of blackberry, cassis and a dash of pepper. Silky smooth in texture and blessed with a length I cannot remember tasting on a Margaux at this stage. Surpasses my expectations at primeur. Tasted November 2011.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“A blend of 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot and 2% Cabernet Franc, close to the average proportions of the last 10 years. The final alcohol comes in at 13.2-13.3%. An extremely alluring bouquet: blackberry, cassis and violets, your quintessential Margaux really, but cloaked in a sense of sensuality and sumptuousness that is rarely seen. Very fine definition with touches of cold limestone coming through. The palate is brilliantly poised with filigree tannins, breathtaking delineation and focus. There is immense intensity here, the energy of the channel with a crisp, taut finish. Wonderful length. Tasted March 2010.”*

- NM, Wine Journal

*“The nose is out of this world, with lilacs, currants, blackberries, and blueberries. Full-bodied, with super silky tannins and savory fruit and amazing flavors of fine leather, blueberries, and sandalwood. The quality of the tannins are amazing, with creamy texture and bright acidity on the end. Such classic and classicism. Delicacy. Lasts for minutes on the palate. Best Margaux in bottle yet...will 2010 be as great? Try it in 2020.”*

- JS, JamesSuckling.com

*“A massive wine for Margaux, packed with tannins and ripe fruit. It has more Cabernet Sauvignon than usual, giving intense black currant flavors with enticing acidity balanced by the sweetness of the fruit. Ripe swathes of this opulent fruit are also elegant and structured.”*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“95-97 Barrel sample. A beautiful wine, great elegance, delicacy and charm. The balance is perfect, with the freshest black currant character. At the center are dry tannins and solid texture. “*

- RV, Wine Enthusiast

*“Good full ruby-red. Pure, ripe aromas of cassis, graphite and cedar, lifted by floral and mineral high notes. Dense and amazingly concentrated yet light on its feet, with compelling, extremely pure flavors of spicy blackcurrant, tobacco leaf and minerals. The extremely long, slow-building and wonderfully fine-grained finish offers an exhilarating combination of power and sweetness. This comes across as quite backward today yet is anything but austere. A real essence of Margaux's great terroir, and one of my favorite wines of the vintage. As I walked to the parking lot with Pontallier after the tasting, he said to me, "If people don't think this is one of the greatest wines I have ever made, then it means I haven't really understood anything in the last 30 years spent making wine.”*

- ID, International Wine Cellar

## Reviews

*"The Cabernet was so good; it was easy to decide the blend for the grand vin -including 87% Cabernet Sauvignon. Blended early Feb. 2009 reminds Pontallier of 1990 because of its lushness. The grand vin was 36% of the crop. pH 3.79, TA 3.3 g/l. Very dark crimson. Sumptuous nose - just gorgeous. So fine, so ripe but with lovely freshness too. Margaux finesse. Truly a wonderful nose. The nose is really the thing already. Will it ever be difficult to drink? Breadth across the palate. Just wonderfully relaxed and fresh and beautifully balanced. Soft tannins on the finish, very, very long. We debate whether the texture is cashmere or silk."*  
- JR, JancisRobinson.com

*"Cabernet Sauvignon 87%, 9% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot, this is 36% of the harvest. Alcohol 13.3% restrained for the vintage. A glossy, darker wine, with a cherry-blue rim. A slightly darker fruit style than Pavillon too, sweet and rounded, less crystalline but more polished. Notes of damson and plum. A remarkable entry, well-defined creaminess, building and building in the midpalate, pouring out fruit elements in a supple and seductive fashion. What makes it so seductive is the tannin profile, ripe and gently honed, sweet and totally in keeping with the rest of the wine. And yet, with all this supple fruit and creamy dark tannin there is acidity too. The finish is poised, fine, and very, very long, with rolling raspberry fruit. What a superb wine, flattering from the nose and right through the midpalate to the finish. Its soft appeal makes this delicious now, never mind in 20 years time - with which it should cope with ease. Certainly, one of the greatest and most elegant young wines from Margaux I have tasted. From my 2009 Bordeaux primeur assessment. 18.5-19.5+/20 (March 2010)*  
- CK, The Wine Doctor

*"Fine black red, quite magical bouquet, pure quality of cashmere silkiness on the palate with a touch of fragrance from Cabernet Franc, blending softness of attack with pure density. A wine of stunning fragrance and purity, the most perfect expression imaginable of the greatest of Margaux vineyards."*  
- SS, Decanter.com

*"Just utterly gorgeous. Again, this mix of almost silky, unseen power, then a powerhouse of fruit. This is relatively open for a young Margaux; there is a real softness right from the start, but in fact this is the highest levels of tannins that they have ever had. It's so fresh, and the tannins are so soft and well worked that you can almost not tell they are there. 87% cabernet sauvignon, and a very reasonable 13.3% alcohol. Pontallier rightly says, 'I have never felt this combination of power with softness and immediate appeal.' Effortlessly elegant. The cabernets for this wine came from the gravel around the chateau. Some cabernets on the property reached up to 15%, but those went into the second or third wine. This is effortlessly elegant."*  
- JA, The New Bordeaux

*"Showing a lovely, deep, intense and dark color, the 2009 Château Margaux looks similar to the 2005. It offers a great yet very different nose from the style of Pavillon Rouge as it is focused on black berries. Very fine, pure, profound and without the usual floral character found in this wine. Unctuous on the palate, it develops all in finesse, as if floating on the palate, madly seductive. It evolves very flavorful and particularly hedonistic, with no hard-edge and finishes melting, long with plenty of taste. It is a great wine. Alcohol content: 13.35%. IPT 77. pH 3.79. The 2009 Grand Vin of Château Margaux is made from a blend of 87% cabernet sauvignon, 9% merlot, 2% petit verdot and 2% cabernet franc. It represents 36% of the harvest but at the end of barrel aging the Grand Vin will be reduced down to represent 31% of the harvest upon bottling. For your reference, I awarded a 20//100 rating for the 2005 vintage, 19//97 for the 2003 vintage and 19.25//98 for the 2000 vintage."*  
- J-MQ

*"Paul Pontallier calls this one of the "densest wines, but also the sweetest "he has ever made. Even if it falls slightly short of Lafite and Latour, it's still a great wine. Very aromatic and alluring, this has cherry and redcurrant fruit, a touch of bramble, well integrated oak, assertive tannins and lively, refreshing, palate-cleansing acidity. 20+ years."*  
- TA, timatkin.com

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